

REMARKS

Claim 1 has been amended. Claim 2 has been canceled, and its subject matter incorporated into claim 1. Thus, claims 1 and 3-13 remain presented for examination. Support for the amendment to claim 1 may be found in original claim 2. Thus, no new matter has been added. Reconsideration and withdrawal of the present rejections in view of the amendments and comments presented herein are respectfully requested.

Prior art rejections

Claims 1, 5-8, 10 and 12 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as being anticipated by Uetani et al. (WO2001/73512), wherein the citations are from the English equivalent, US 2003/0113661.

Claims 1, 4-6, 9 and 12 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as anticipated by Uetani et al. (WO 2000/46640), wherein the citations are from the English-language equivalent US 6,627,381.

Claim 3 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Uetani et al. (WO2001/73512), wherein the citations are from the English equivalent, US 2003/0113661.

Claim 11 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Uetani et al. (WO2001/73512), wherein the citations are from the English equivalent, US 2003/0113661, in view of Ichikawa et al. (US 6,153,349).

Claim 13 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Uetani et al. (WO2001/73512), wherein the citations are from the English equivalent, US 2003/0113661, in view of Ishibashi et al. (US 6,579,657).

The Office Action at page 12, item 10, states that Claim 2 is objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, but would be allowable if rewritten in independent form, including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims. Claim 1 as amended incorporates the features recited in canceled claim 2. Thus, claim 1 as amended is equivalent to claim 2 rewritten in independent form, including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims. Thus, claim 1 should now be allowable. All of the remaining claims depend directly (claims 3-5, 7-12) or indirectly (claims 6 and 13) from claim 1. Thus, claims 3-13 should also be allowable.

In view of the claim amendments and comments presented above, Applicants respectfully request reconsideration and withdrawal of the prior art rejections.

CONCLUSION

In view of the foregoing amendments and comments, it is respectfully submitted that the present application is fully in condition for allowance. However, if minor matters remain, the Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned at the telephone number provided below.

Respectfully submitted,

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